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KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

CASE STUDY

Timely Support Brings High Profit to the Farmers

USAID increased the use of improved seeds and helped farmers make a high profit



Photo: IFDC Guljamal Chokmorova

Seed Assistance Voucher Program beneficiary Abduraimova Lailahan, the Chairwoman of Agricultural Cooperative.

“We greatly appreciate USAID’s timely and effective support. Now we see that certified seeds can produce high yields and we are going to use only high-quality seeds”

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CHALLENGE In 2010, a high proportion (over 60%) of cereal crops and sunflower were consumed on-farm for livestock feed and human consumption. For potatoes, the percentage was 37%, safflower 28% and sugar beet 9%. The low yield levels and productivity seriously reduced sale volumes for small farmers. Kyrgyzstan faced another potential shortfall in food production in 2011 due to the supply disruptions and cost increases of yield-enhancing agro-inputs, including high-quality seeds in 2010.

INITIATIVE The U.S. Government, through USAID, and the Government of Kyrgyzstan, established a \$4.1 million Seed Assistance Voucher Program to be jointly implemented by USAID’s Kyrgyz Agro-Input Enterprise Development Project and the Ministry of Agriculture. The goal of the program was to increase the use of improved barley, potato, safflower, sunflower, sugar beet and wheat seeds in Kyrgyzstan during the spring planting season of 2011. The program supported under the Economic Development Fund (EDF) provided seeds for selected farmers in 42 districts in all seven provinces to approximately 34,000 farmers, 160 agricultural cooperatives and 81 seed farms throughout Kyrgyzstan. Each participating farmer, cooperative and seed farm received a voucher that was exchanged for a specific commodity at the seed distribution point. The quality seeds helped farmers to increase their incomes and boost food security in the country.

RESULTS In 2011, all farmers who received seed through vouchers had increased crop yields: 3% for sunflower, 10% for potato, 37% for barley, 51% for wheat and 132% for sugar beet. As a result, participating farms reached or exceeded national average yields. One of the participants was the Posh Kadam agricultural cooperative in southern Kyrgyzstan. The comparatively young cooperative established in 2007 represents 17 families engaged in growing corn, cotton, potatoes, sunflower and wheat. The cooperative planted 1 metric ton of *Elita* potato seeds on their 0.34 hectare and harvested 5 metric tons. Thanks to the high quality seeds received, farmers were able to double their yields and increase their profits. Previously, while using low-quality seeds harvests only amounted to 2.5-3 metric tons from the same plot of land. “Using high-quality seeds we could generate a good income. In the past we used to plant average quality seeds with low productivity, now we see that only certified seeds can produce high yields”, said Lailahan Abduraimova, Chairwoman of the Posh Kadam cooperative. Lailahan and other farmers plan to sow their fields with wheat, corn and potato using only high-quality seeds during the next planting season.